WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
HEADQUARTERS
801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.
FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

No. 13.

CONTEMPT CASE UP AGAIN

Committee Appointed by Justice Wright of District of Columbia Supreme Court Makes Report.

SUGGESTS MAKING APOLOGY

Apparent Determination to Administer Summary Punishment Against American Federation of Labor Officials.

Washington, July 1.--When the United States Supreme Court handed down its decision in the Gompers, Morrison and Mitchell case, Justice Wright of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia, immediately took advantage of the closing sentence of the decision, which says, after a dismissal of the case had been ordered: "But without prejudice to the power and right of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia to punish by a proper proceeding contempt, if any, committed against it." Justice Wright appointed a committee of attorneys, J. J. Darlington, Daniel Davenport and James Beck, attorneys for the Anti-Boycott Association and the National Manufacturers' Association, and who assisted in the prosecution of the American Federation of Labor. This committee has now reported to Justice Wright, and summonses have been served on President Gompers, Secretary Morrison and Vice President Mitchell, notifying them that they must appear in court on July 17 to show cause why they should not be adjudged in contempt of court. In the report of the committee it is suggested that an apology to the court would provide a means of escaping punishment. It is stated that all of the Judges of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia will sit in the case, but it is asserted that Justice Wright will decide upon the punishment, if any punishment there be, which seems imminent at this time. That there will be any apology forthcoming is hardly in the realm of possibility. President Gompers has stoutly maintained that in all his acts during this controversy, he has only exercised his constitutional rights. It is apparent that Justice Wright and the attorneys whom he appointed on the committee are not satisfied unless drastic punishment is administered to President Gompers, Secretary Morrison and Vice President Mitchell. That the plan has been well laid is not questioned, but it is a question whether or not the people of this country will permit the right of free speech and free press to be denied by court injunction. Some courts have apparently become imbued with the idea that they have a right not only to interpret and execute the law, but to make laws to suit their convenience. Even the President of the United States has seen fit to issue an executive order denying the right of the employes of the Government to exercise the

prerogatives of free citizenship. This state of affairs cannot exist in a country like ours. The question of the power of courts over a free press and free speech, must be determined, and no better time could be appropriated than the present. The American Federation of Labor has at all times been a law abiding organization, and its officers have persistently advised that under all circumstances the law should be obeyed. But equally with every other class of citizens, the men of labor of this country do not propose that they shall be deprived of the rights guaranteed to each individual under the constitution. If the sacrifice of the liberty of a few individuals is necessary to re-establish fundamental guarantees, the labor movement of our country has produced men with sufficient courage to make the sacrifice. Whatever may be the result, it can be truthfully predicted that the American Federation of Labor will be true to its former history, standing for the right, whatever the cost, that the liberty of not only the members of the labor organizations shall be preserved, but the whole people as well.

UNIONS, TAKE HEED

Washington, July 1.--Just recently warning was sent to labor papers and the unions cautioning them against entering into business relations with irresponsible men who are traveling about the country getting out special editions. This warning was issued because in several instances these men had gone into various cities and after securing the endorsement of the central body, would take advertisements indiscriminately and further fail to fulfill the obligations they had entered into. Information has just been received at headquarters that another scheme has been concocted. The placards having the lithographed union labels of the various crafts issued by the American Federation of Labor have been secured in some manner, and then advertisements solicited to be placed around lithographs as a border, the solicitor agreeing to divide the proceeds with the union from which he got the endorsement. It is stated that in numerous instances these obligations have not been fulfilled. The unions should be very careful in giving endorsements to anyone, no matter for what purpose.

SEAMEN'S STRIKE

Washington, July 1.--The latest accurate reports obtainable are to the effect that the Seamen's strike is being successful. It is now asserted that the Shipping Federation, a world-wide concern, is about to permit the individual companies, a part of the Federation, to use their own discretion relative to settlements with the Seamen. If this decision is arrived at, the ultimate success of the organization is assured.

MCNAMARA CONFERENCE

Washington, July 1.--President Gompers and Secretary Morrison left Washington on June 27, to be present at the conference to be held in Indianapolis, Ind., of all the national officials of labor organizations, to take up the question of a proper defense of J. J. McNamara and his brother. A general program will be adopted by this conference in the matter of raising funds, as well as to the conduct of the case.

JUDICIARY CRITICIZED

An Article on "Our Judicial Oligarchy" Begins Serially in a Prominent Weekly Journal.

Washington, July 1.--While there has come objections from many quarters criticizing the acts of our courts, yet there is apparently an ever increasing sentiment that instead of this criticism being harmful it will eventually result in the accomplishment of much good. Commencing with the last issue of LaFollette's Weekly there is begun the first of a series of articles under the caption "Our Judicial Oligarchy." It is interesting throughout and below is quoted a short excerpt indicating the trend of sentiment expressed:

"In the City of New York during the early months of 1911 there was held a Child's Welfare Exhibition. It was a most conservative and benevolent undertaking, conducted by most conservative and benevolent people. Prominent among its exhibits was a quotation from an opinion of the Court of Appeals of the State of New York. In 1884 the legislature of the State passed an act entitled "An Act to Improve the Public Health by Prohibiting the Manufacture of Cigars and the Preparation of Tobacco in any Form in Tenement Houses in certain cases", etc. The Court of Appeals held this law unconstitutional, and in the opinion used the language was prominently displayed in letters nearly a foot long in the Child's Welfare Exhibit. The language was as follows: "It cannot be conceived how the cigarmaker is to be improved in his health or morals by forcing him from his home and its hallowed association and beneficent influences to ply his trade elsewhere." Under this quotation in the Child's Welfare Exhibit was the statement in equally large letters; 'This decision has blocked effective tenement house legislation up to the present.' That the decision of its highest court should be held up to the scorn and contempt of the people of the State by the exceedingly conservative and philanthropic persons managing this exhibit is very significant and the remarks that were heard made by those who read the placard were not less so."

COOPERS IN FINE SHAPE

Washington, July 1.--Information has been received from the Secretary-Treasurer of the Coopers' International Union that business in the cooperage trade throughout the country is exceedingly good, and that there are no idle men, in fact there is a dearth of men. This organization has signed up numerous contracts this spring, every one of which give a substantial increase in wages and also the shortening of the workday to 8 hours. These agreements have all been secured without strike, except in one instance, that in Chicago, lasting only five days.

SAFETY FOR ARCHIVES

Washington, July 1.--Congressman Sheppard of Texas has introduced a bill proposing the erection in Washington of a national archives building capable of containing all government records and papers not in current use. It is contemplated that this building will contain 1,500,000 feet of space, built in such a manner as to be increased to a much greater capacity without destroying the architectural beauty of the building.

RIGHT TO PETITION

Speaker Clark of the House of Representatives Expresses Himself Against "Gag" Rule.

Washington, July 1.--The Post Office Department, under its autocratic officials, is being severely criticised from every quarter. The usurpation of the constitutional rights of the employes of the Government is not taken kindly to by anyone except the officials of the Department. Speaker Clark, when asked his position upon the matter replied as follows:

"The 'Gag' rule to the effect that employes of the Government shall not petition Congress, or any member of Congress about their wants, or for redress of their grievances, first issued by ex-president Roosevelt and made stronger by President Taft, is un-democratic, un-republican, un-American and unconstitutional. The art of typesetting has been described as the art preservative of all arts, and the right of petition might be as properly described as the right preservative of all rights. So far as I am individually concerned, I have never paid the slightest attention to this 'gag' rule. I talk to all the government employes who come to see me about anything. I tell them that they have a right to talk to me. I may not agree with them in all their ideas about improving their condition, but they have a right to be heard, and so long as I am Speaker, the doors of the Speaker's room open inward as far as they are concerned. Free speech is one of the fundamental principles of the American people. * * * I have no doubt that Government employes have a good many things to complain of and a good many things to suggest for the good of the public service. They ought to be heard, and so far as I am concerned, they will be heard."

A "RABBIT" UNION

Washington, July 1.--While the labor unions in this country are largely confined to trades and special callings, those of Australia cover nearly every imaginable character of work. There is now being organized a "rabbiter's" union. This organization is being formed under the auspices of what is known as the "Trappers' League". The men eligible to the "rabbiter's" union, as the name signifies, are those engaged in the hunting of rabbits for the market. Already, through the efforts of the young organization, the Minister of Agriculture has made arrangements for the freezing and packing of rabbits to meet the requirements of the rabbit hunters for the coming season. This action on the part of the Minister is to guard against the "rabbit combine".

HALF-HOLIDAYS TO BEGIN

Washington, July 1.--Beginning with the first Saturday in July, the employes in the various Government departments will be given a half-holiday each week, extending until Sept. 30, of this year. This will give a small army, 30,000 in number, an opportunity for a period of recreation.

PARCELS POST HEARINGS

Washington, July 1.--Hearings will be granted to those opposed to the establishment of a parcels post system by the House Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads, commencing on July 12.

HIGH WAGES--SHORT HOURS

A Speech Delivered in Congress Contains Valuable and Unanswerable Arguments in Favor of Labor.

Washington, July 1.--Congressman Redfield of New York, in a speech delivered in the House of Representatives on the wool schedule made many illuminating references to matters in which organized labor has been and is intensely interested. Employers of labor have been slow to acknowledge that short hours and high wages work not only to the advantage of the wage earner but also to the employer. In Mr. Redfield's speech he brings out very clearly some of the questions that have been considered as differences not to be reconciled.

"About twelve years ago the head of a concern in Brooklyn decided that he would put his factory on a 9-hour a day basis. He became satisfied that there was an element in the 10-hour day that was real but difficult to see, namely, the tired hour. He became satisfied that the tenth hour was the tired hour--that at that time the point was reached under which a man could not work to the highest advantage. He put his factory on a 9-hour a day basis and kept a very careful record of his cost. At the end of the year it was 4% to the good. He made an absolutely larger product. The wages remained the same. I presume you gentlemen are all aware of the experiment that took place in the great shipbuilding yards of William Denny & Sons, who as a result of conferences between them and their workmen agreed that they would try the 8-hour day for a year, at the end of which time if the result showed no disadvantage to earnings in the 8-hour day, it would be retained, otherwise the men agreed to go back to the 9-hour day. As a result, at the end of the year they retained the 8-hour day because it paid. I do not mean to argue from this that you could go with an ax and cut everything arbitrarily to 8 hours, but that the proper and reasonable adjustment of things to that will some day obtain is unquestioned."

LOAN SHARKS TO GO

Washington, July 1.--By an order of Secretary Nagel of the Department of Commerce and Labor, assignments of salaries of employes to loan companies is prohibited. The practice of loan companies in the past in appealing to government officials to aid them in the collection of loans has been in existence for a number of years and has worked not only to the disadvantage of the Department, but to the employes as well. This order affects all subsidiary bureaus connected with the Department of Commerce and Labor.

SECOND CLASS MAIL

Washington, July 1.--The commission appointed to inquire into the transportation and handling of second class mail announces that it will hold its first session in the Post Office Building, New York City on July 18. Colley W. Bell, Colorado Building, Washington, is the Secretary of the Commission.

ANTWERP STRIKE

Washington, July1.--The ship boiler cleaners at Antwerp are on strike. As a result work has entirely ceased in this branch, with bright prospects for an early and favorable settlement.

Local Unions of United Brotherhood Have Been Successful in Many Cities in Raising Wages and Reducing Hours.

Washington, July 1.—Local unions of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters have been successful in securing many advances in wages, with a considerable reduction in hours.

At Montpelier, Vt., wages have been raised from $2.70 to $3.00 per day of eight hours.

At Kingston, Ont., an advance has been secured from 31½¢ to 35¢ per hour for an eight-hour day.

At Sheboygan, Wis., the minimum wage has been advanced to $3.20 per day of eight hours.

At Columbus, Ind., after a short strike, a raise was secured of from 1 to 5 cents per hour, the scale now being $3.15 per day.

At Cheyenne, Wyo., after a two days' strike, a settlement was secured with a 5 cent per hour advance, 55¢ per hour for eight-hour day now being the scale.

At Derby, Conn., a settlement has been secured and a raise of 25¢ per day gained, the minimum scale being $3.25 for an eight-hour day.

At St. Johns, N. B., after a short strike, an advance in wages was secured from $2.50 to $3.00 per day.

At Somersworth, N. H., an advance has been secured from $1.55 to $2.00 per day.

At Medicine Hat, Can., an increase was secured from $4.05 to $4.50 per day, with eight hours after Nov. 1, with Saturday half-holiday.

At Westfield, N. J., an increase of 7¢ per day was secured.

At Astoria, Ore. an increase has been secured from $3.50 to $4.00 per day of eight hours.

At Fairbury, Neb., an increase was secured of 5¢ per hour and a reduction in hours from 9 to 8. The scale is now $3.00 per day.

At Boone, Ia., an increase of 5¢ per hour was secured, the scale now being $3.42 per day.

At Auburn, N. Y., an increase in wages of 3½¢ per hour was secured, $3.28 per day now being the scale.

In Delaware County, Pa., an increase in wages was secured of from 40 to 45¢ per hour, and an eight-hour day.

THE LAWYERS' UNION

Washington, July 1.—It is admitted that the layman may not be able to understand the technicalities of the law, but when common sense is applied, it does seem that the law as interpreted by Judges is of a peculiarly elusive quantity. A young lady in Atlanta, Ga., after graduating in the Atlanta Law School with high honors, applied to the Superior Court to become a member of the "Lawyers" union. The "business agent" of the "lawyers" union, Judge Pendleton, has refused to issue to the young lady a "working card", declaring that to do so would be "unconstitutional". Now she can't work. No "open shop" goes in the courts.

SIGNS FULL CREW BILL

Washington, July 1.—Governor Tener of Pennsylvania has signed the Full Crew Bill, passed by the last Legislature.

RATES OF POSTAGE

United States Postal Treaties with Foreign Countries Discriminate Against American Users of the Mails.

Washington, July 1.--Senate Bill 2873, just introduced by Senator Bourne of Oregon, reveals the fact that foreign countries, under treaties now existing, are more favorably considered than the citizens of our country relative to postage rates. In the course of an explanation of his bill Senator Bourne said:

"It may seem strange to members of the Senate that there should be a possibility of legislation giving American citizens privileges in the United States mails between themselves equally with those enjoyed by residents of this country in transaction of business with residents of foreign countries. Within the United States the rate of postage on fourth class matter is 16¢ a pound, with a limit of four pounds. The United States is party to a treaty under which residents of twenty-nine foreign countries may send fourth-class matter through the United States mails at 12¢ a pound, with a limit of eleven pounds. In other words, a man may send an eleven-pound package from San Francisco to Rome, Italy, at 12¢ a pound, but if he wishes to send the same articles to New York, he must divide them into packages of not to exceed four pounds each and pay 16¢ a pound. * * * The Committee on Post Offices and Post Roads of both the Senate and House have under consideration bills for the establishment of a parcels post. I believe Congress will establish a parcels post rate at less than 12¢ a pound and a rate very much less than that for short hauls."

VACATION IN ENGLAND

Washington, July 1.--Sailing on the Campania on the 28th, Arthur E. Holder, legislative committeeman for the American Federation of Labor, left this country to spend about two months in Great Britain. Mr. Holder was accompanied by his wife.

WAITERS STRIKE

Frenchmen Object to Regulations Which Deprive Them of Their Personal Adornment.

Washington, July 1.--Three thousand waiters in Marseilles have gone on strike for 90 francs per month and the right to wear mustaches. The proprietors have formed an association and increased the price of drinks, and this action has had the effect of lessening the tips usually received by French waiters, hence the demand for higher wages, together with a demand that waiters be permitted to grow hair on their faces if they so desire. The cooks also are demanding a "copyright" for their invention of novel food concoctions.

MORE PAY FOR MECHANICS

Washington, July 1.--Efforts have been made by members of the City Council of Philadelphia to get an increase in wages for the mechanics in the filtration plants of that city. An amendment was recently adopted carrying a slight increase to a few of the employes, but was stricken out by the Mayor. A new bill has been introduced which provides for an appropriation of about $23,000 to increase the pay of these water department employes, some 422 in number.

DENVER MUSICIANS WIN

Washington, July 1.—The Banda Mexicana, known to the Musicians' Union as the Peon Band, has been withdrawn from Luna Park in Denver. The union men of the city refused to patronize the park and it proved such a serious injury that a settlement was made with the local Musician's Union.

CEREAL MILL WORKERS

Washington, July 1.—There has been organized a local union of Cereal Mill Workers at Freeburg, Ill. An agreement has been signed for a 9-hour day at 20¢ per hour. The product of the mill in which the members of this organization are to be employed are to use the union label on its products.

LABORERS GET INCREASE

Washington, July 1.—The laborers organized in Massillon, O., have been granted an increase of 1½¢ per hour.

BUREAU OF MINES MEET

Washington, July 1.—There will be held a National Meeting in Arsenal Park, Pittsburg, Pa., Saturday, Sept. 16, by the Bureau of Mines. Dr. Holmes, Director of the Bureau of Mines, will attend and speak to the miners. It is expected that between 20,000 and 30,000 miners will attend, and that many of the important coal companies will send their trained first aides and rescue corps to take part in the exhibition.

CARRIAGE WORKERS WIN-

Washington, July 1.—Local union of the International Carriage and Wagon Workers at Milwaukee, after a short strike against the open shop, reached an agreement and all the men returned to work.

LIABILITY BILL SIGNED

Washington, July 1.—The Green Liability Bill passed by the Ohio State Legislature, has been signed by the Governor.

STOVE MOUNTERS GET INCREASE

Washington, July 1.—After a strike of five weeks against the Toledo Stove and Range Company by the Stove Mounters, a satisfactory settlement has been reached. Increases on piece work varying from 1¢ to 15¢ have been secured, as well as an increase of 10¢ a day for day work, and a Saturday half-holiday.

UTICA LABOR TEMPLE

Washington, July 1.— The cornerstone of the Labor Temple in Utica, N. Y. is about to be laid. President Gompers has been invited to deliver an address upon that occasion, but owing to a previous engagement made for St. Louis on that day, he is unable to accept.

DOINGS OF BLACKSMITHS

Increase in Membership, Securing of Contracts and Increases of Wages Are Everyday Story With Prominent Iron Trade.

Washington, July 1.—The International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths and Helpers report that the organization is moving along in splendid shape and is making exceptional progress this year.

The carriage and wagon workers affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths and Helpers of Pittsburg, Pa., went on strike to enforce the Saturday half-holiday during the months of June, July, August and September, with full pay. They were out only a week when settlements were reached with practically all of the employers and new agreements signed.

Mining tools manufacturers of Alton, Ill., Ottumwa, Ia., What Cheer, Ia., Chicago Heights, Ill. and Salem, O., are about to sign up their annual agreements with the International Brotherhood.

The Chain Makers in Columbus, O., Braddock, Pa., Pittsburg, Pa. and Brewster, O., have just been organized and charter issued by the International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths.

Shop federations, consisting of blacksmiths, boilermakers, machinists, sheet metal workers and carmen, have been organized on the Illinois Central, Harriman lines, Rock Island and Chicago and Northwestern, and agreements will be presented in the near future.

The strike on the Pere Marquette by the Railroad Department has been adjusted and conferences are now being held with the various crafts and the General Manager.

The Brotherhood of Blacksmiths have signed an agreement with the Canadian Northern Railroad, with a 2 cent per hour advance and improved conditions in the shops.

MUST REPORT ACCIDENTS

Washington, July 1.—A law was enacted by Congress about a year ago making it compulsory for transportation companies to report any collision, derailment, or other accident, resulting in the death of one or more persons. This enactment has not been satisfactorily complied with and the Interstate Commerce Commission has just issued an order to all common railway carriers that the law must hereafter be strictly complied with. The commission being required by law to keep a record of such accidents, decided that more drastic rules were necessary, hence the issuance of the order.

SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AUSTRALIA

Washington, July 1.—A minimum wage of $550 per year for adults has been adopted in the New South Wales State Departments. The same minimum has been adopted in the Education Department for male teachers over 21 years of age, and for female teachers working under onerous conditions in outlying places.

RECALL DECLARED CONSTITUTIONAL

Washington, July 1.—The Supreme Court of the State of Texas has just handed down a decision whereby it has upheld the recall provision in the Dallas, Tex. city charter.

San Francisco, Under a Union Labor Administration, to Operate a Traction Company Owned by the City.

Washington, July 1.--The labor party administration of San Francisco has commenced the operation of the Geary Street Railway, which has been turned over to the city as the result of the expiration of a franchise. Every legal obstacle known was put in the way of the city administration to take over and operate this line. It is necessary, owing to the extremely bad physical condition of the roadbed and the cars, that it be almost wholly reconstructed, and on June 14 active work commenced. Mayor McCarthy has announced that all of the work to be done in rehabilitating the road will be done by union labor, and that when completed the motormen, conductors and all employes of the operating department will be put upon an 8-hour day, and a wage rate that will enable the employes to maintain a high standard of living. It is stated that the Employers' organizations and other associations of a like character are very much perturbed over the action taken by the union labor administration.

"SOMETHING FOR NOTHING"

Washington, July 1.--An article has just been published in the American Magazine under the caption as given above. It deals with convict labor and is full of interesting facts. It may seem rather singular, but it is recounted that in the county jail at New Haven, Conn., a company has a contract whereby 200 men in the county jail are employed at an average price of 8 cents a day. Other interesting matter is included, together with a table showing the general loss sustained by penal institutions in their contracts with private concerns.

INSPECTION BILL VETOED

Washington, July 1.--Governor Shafroth of Colorado, it is stated, at the request of the representatives of the Miners' Union, has vetoed the coal mining inspection bill passed by the recent legislature, which was intended to prevent accidents in the coal mines. The objection offered ny the Miners was that the amendment tacked on in the Senate requiring coal miners to pay the cost of shot firing, and it was estimated that this would have taken $168,000 every year from the wages of the miners.

IRON MOLDERS WIN

Washington, July 1.--The Toronto Iron Molders have won their strike for an increased wage rate. The old agreement called for a minimum wage for molders of $2.90 per day and core makers $2.65 per day. Under the new agreement the molders are to receive $3.10 per day and the core makers $3 per day.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE DEFEATED

Washington, July 1.--The legislature of Connecticut has defeated the woman suffrage bill by killing the proposed constitutional amendment, which had it gone before the people would have struck out the word "male" from the constitution and given general suffrage.